



**Garland Independent School District
501 S. Jupiter
Garland, TX 75042**

December 1, 2020

**VIA CERTIFIED MAIL AND
ELECTRONIC MAIL**

Mike Morath
Commissioner of Education
Texas Education Agency
1701 North Congress Avenue
Austin, TX 78701
commissioner@tea.texas.gov

RE: Notice to the Commissioner of Education of Garland Independent School District
Adoption of Amendment to Final Local Innovation Plan (as revised)

Dear Commissioner Morath:

On February 25, 2020 the Board of Trustees of the Garland Independent School District adopted a Resolution to initiate the process of amending its Local Innovation Plan (as revised). On March 27, 2020, the District posted on its website the Resolution and the Proposed Amendment (as revised) and notified you of the Board's intention to vote on the Proposed Amendment to the Plan (as revised) on April 28, 2020. On March 18, 2020, the district-level committee, the GISD Districtwide Educational Improvement Council (DEIC) held a public meeting to discuss and vote on the Proposed Amendment to the Plan (as revised). The GISD DEIC passed the Proposed Amendment to the Plan (as revised) unanimously.

On April 28, 2020, at a special board meeting, the GISD Board of Trustees adopted the Proposed Amendment to the Plan (as revised). At the meeting, all seven trustees were present. Trustee Jamie Miller moved that the Board adopt the Amendment to the Plan (as revised). Trustee Robert Selders seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 7-0. Enclosed is a copy to the Amendment to the Plan (as revised). Also, enclosed is the Amendment to the plan. The link to the GISD website where the Amendment is located is <https://www.garlandisd.net/content/district-innovation>. The District closure as a result of COVID19 impacted the mailing of the notification.

If you have any questions, then please contact me directly at (214) 298-1380.

Sincerely,



Brent Ringo, Ed.D.
Chief Financial Officer
Garland ISD
bringo@garlandisd.net

Enclosures
Resolution
Amendment
Final Local Innovation Plan (As Revised)

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF THE GARLAND INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**

STATE OF TEXAS

§

COUNTY OF DALLAS

§

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Whereas, Pursuant to 12A.001 and 12A.007 of the Texas Education Code the Garland Independent School District (GISD or the District) Board of Trustees wishes to begin the process for GISD to amend the District's current District of Innovation Plan;

Whereas, Texas Education Code 12A.007 provides that a local innovation plan may be amended if the action is approved by a vote of the district-level committee established under Texas Education Code 11.251, or comparable committee if the district is exempt from that section, and the Board of Trustees in the same manner as required for initial adoption of a local innovation plan under Texas Education Code 12A.005;

Whereas, The Board of Trustees is requesting that the District-Level Committee review a possible amendment of the District's current Local Innovation Plan to include exemption from Texas Education Code 22.004 (i) and to consider other possible amendments necessary to carry out the purpose of this Resolution;

Whereas, a local innovation plan must provide for a comprehensive educational program for the district, which program may include:

- innovative curriculum, instructional methods, and provisions regarding community participation, campus governance, and parental involvement;
- modifications to the school day or year;
- provisions regarding the district budget and sustainable program funding;
- accountability and assessment measures that exceed the requirements of state and federal law; and
- any other innovations prescribed by the board of trustees; and
- identify requirements imposed by this code that inhibit the goals of the plan and from which the district should be exempted on adoption of the plan, subject to Section 12A.004.

Whereas, Texas Education Code 12A.004 provides that a local innovation plan may not provide for the exemption of a district designated as a district of innovation from the following provisions of this title:

- a state or federal requirement applicable to an open-enrollment charter school operating under Subchapter D, Chapter 12;
- (2) Subchapters A, C, D, and E, Chapter 11, except that a district may be exempt from Sections 11.1511(b)(5) and (14) and Section 11.162;
- (3) state curriculum and graduation requirements adopted under Chapter 28; and
- (4) academic and financial accountability and sanctions under Chapters 39 and 39A.

Whereas, Texas Education Code 12A.004 provides that the commissioner shall: maintain a list of provisions of this title from which school districts designated as districts of innovation are

exempt under this chapter; and notify the legislature of each provision from which districts enrolling a majority of students in this state are exempt.

Whereas, Texas Administrative Code Title 19 Chapter 102 Subchapter JJ Section 102.1309 provides an innovation district may not be exempted from the following sections of the Texas Education Code (TEC) and the rules adopted thereunder:

- a state or federal requirement, imposed by statute or rule, applicable to an open-enrollment charter school operating under the TEC, Chapter 12, Subchapter D, including, but not limited to, the requirements listed in the TEC, §12.104(b), and:
- TEC, Chapter 22, Subchapter B;
- TEC, Chapter 25, Subchapter A, §§25.001, 25.002, 25.0021, 25.0031, and 25.004;
- TEC, Chapter 28,
§§28.002, 28.0021, 28.0023, 28.005, 28.0051, 28.006, 28.016, 28.0211, 28.0213, 28.0217, 28.025, 28.0254, 28.02541, 28.0255, 28.0258, 28.0259, and 28.026;
- TEC, Chapter 29, Subchapter G;
- TEC, Chapter 30, Subchapter A;
- TEC, §30.104;
- TEC, Chapter 34;
- TEC, Chapter 37, §§37.006(l), 37.007(e), 37.011, 37.012, 37.013, and 37.020; and
- TEC, Chapter 39;
- TEC, Chapter 11, Subchapters A, C, D, and E, except that a district may be exempt from the TEC, §11.1511(b)(5) and (14) and §11.162;
- TEC, Chapter 13;
- TEC, Chapter 41;
- TEC, Chapter 42;
- TEC, Chapter 44,
§§44.0011, 44.002, 44.003, 44.004, 44.0041, 44.005, 44.0051, 44.006, 44.007, 44.0071, 44.008, 44.009, 44.011, 44.0312, 44.032, 44.051, 44.052, 44.053, and 44.054;
- TEC, Chapter 45, §§45.003, 45.0031, 45.005, 45.105, 45.106, 45.202, 45.203; and
- TEC, Chapter 46.

Whereas, in addition to the prohibited exemptions specified above of this Resolution, an innovation district may not be exempted from:

- a requirement of a grant or other state program in which the district voluntarily participates;
- duties that the statute applies to the execution of that power if a district chooses to implement an authorized power that is optional under the terms of the statute; and
- requirements imposed by provisions outside the TEC, including requirements under the Texas Government Code, Chapter 822.

Whereas, Texas Insurance Code Section 1579.152 provides that effective September 1, 2005, a school district with more than 500 employees may elect to participate in the program. A school district that elects to participate under this section shall apply for participation in the manner prescribed by the trustee by rule.

Whereas, GISD elected to participate in the program in 2011.

Whereas, Texas Education Code 22.004 (i) provides notwithstanding any other provision of this section, a district participating in the uniform group coverage program established under Chapter 1579, Insurance Code, may not make group health coverage available to its employees under this section after the date on which the program of coverages provided under Chapter 1579, Insurance Code, is implemented;

Whereas, Texas Education 22.004 (i) precludes GISD from providing alternative group health coverage available to its employees under this section after the date on which the program of coverages provided under Chapter 1579, Insurance Code, is implemented “program” (TRS ActiveCare) established by 1579 of the Insurance Code.

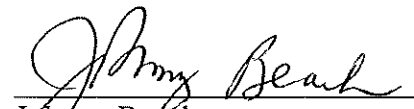
Whereas, Texas Education Code 22.004 is not in any of the prohibited exemptions that can be included in a District’s local innovation plan pursuant to Texas Education Code 12A.004 and the list of the Commissioner’s prohibited exemptions in Texas Administrative Code Title 19, Chapter 102, subchapter JJ, Section 102.1309.


Whereas, if an exemption to Texas Education Code 22.004(i) is adopted by the District Level Committee and subsequently the Board of Trustees pursuant to Texas Education Code 12A.005, GISD may be able to provide alternative group health coverage to its employees in addition to the health coverage made available by TRS ActiveCare without opting out of the “program” as described in 34 Texas Administrative Code § 41.30(a)(4), thus, possibly giving itself the ability to provide better and cheaper health coverage to its employees without violating any State statute or regulation;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Board of Trustees of the Garland Independent School District, by adoption of this resolution, finds all of the above to be true.

Be It Further Resolved that after this resolution is signed by the Board, the appropriate committee appointed shall develop amendments to the current District Local Innovation Plan consistent with the findings contained in this resolution and with all statutes, regulations, and local board policies.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 25th day of February, 2020.


Johnny Beach
President, Board of Trustees


Jamie Miller
Secretary, Board of Trustees

GARLAND ISD INNOVATION PLAN AMENDMENT TO CURRENT LOCAL INNOVATION PLAN

AREA OF INNOVATION

With regards to each area of innovation, the District declares exemption from the listed statutory provision, as well as any implementing rules or regulations promulgated pursuant to those statutory provisions by any state agency or entity, including but not limited to the Commissioner of Education, Texas Education Agency, State Board for Educator Certification, and State Board of Education.

1. **Preclusion from providing alternative Uniform Group Coverage Program once the program of coverages under Chapter 1579, Insurance Code is implemented.**

Exemption from: §22.004(i)

Related Board Policies: GISD CRD (LEGAL) and CRD (LOCAL)

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan

TEC §22.004(i) states that a school district may not make group health coverage available to its employees pursuant to TEC §22.004(b) after the date a District implements the program of coverages provided under Chapter 1579 of the Texas Insurance Code. The current process allows no flexibility in the design of group health insurance benefits to fit the needs of all El Paso ISD employees. This provision also prohibits the District from procuring group health insurance benefits that may provide better coverages for its employees and at a lower cost. This provision is in direct contradiction to the wishes of the local Board of Trustees who represent community interests in this matter.

On February 25, 2020 the Board of Trustees adopted findings declaring that Texas Education Code 22.004 is not in any of the prohibited exemptions that can be included in a District's local innovation plan pursuant to Texas Education Code 12.A004 and the list of the Commissioner's prohibited exemptions in Texas Administrative Code Title 19, Chapter 102, subchapter JJ, Section 102.1309

Innovation Strategies

- a. Increased local control of the group health benefits to allow the District to be responsive to employee and community needs.



GARLAND INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

District of Innovation Plan



Vision Statement

Reaching the future by driving excellence, one student at a time.

Board of Trustees

Linda Griffin, President

Jed Reed, Vice President

Larry H. Glick, Secretary

Johnny Beach, Assistant Secretary

Scott Lloyd Luna, Trustee

Robert Selders, Jr., Trustee

Rick Lambert, Trustee

District Administration

Dr. Deborah Cron, Interim Superintendent

Deborah Cabrera, Interim Chief Financial Officer

Dr. Linda Chance, Chief Officer of Human Resources

Dr. Jovan Wells, Associate Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment

Dr. Wendy Eldredge, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services & Community Relations

Gradyne Brown, Executive Director of Human Resources

Joel Falcon, Executive Director of Facilities & Maintenance

Dr. Mida Milligan, Executive Director of Communications & Public Relations

Ms. Laurie Vondersaar, Executive Technology Officer

Districtwide Educational Improvement Council

Local Innovation Committee Members

Jacob Acton, Memorial Pathway, Teacher
Representative

Christine Adame, PAC, Teacher
Representative

Shelley Allen, Cooper, Teacher Representative

Keith Baker, Coyle, Non-Teaching
Representative

Mark Ballard, Hudson, Teacher
Representative

Charlotte Ballard, Kimberlin, Non-Teaching
Representative

Sandi Banks, Vial, Teacher Representative

Cari Bergstrom, Liberty Grove, Teacher
Representative

Laura Blackman, Parsons Pre-K, Teacher
Representative

Ariel Boone, Business Representative

Connie Burgess, Keeley, Teacher
Representative

Martha Burnett, Hickman, Non-Teaching
Representative

Kimberly Caddell, GISD, DEIC Facilitator

Juan Campos, NGHS, Teacher Representative

Wendi Carpenter, Toler, Teacher
Representative

Judy Castro, Armstrong, Teacher
Representative

Jared Clough, LCHS, Teacher Representative

Marsha Cunningham, Freeman, Teacher
Representative

Jackie Davis, Walnut Glen, Teacher
Representative

Loretto Di Bernardini, Cisneros Pre-K, Teacher
Representative

Gerardo Duarte, Caldwell, Teacher
Representative

Kristina Duke, Club Hill, Teacher
Representative

Kim Edwards, Back, Teacher Representative

Jordan Eggers, Hillside, Teacher
Representative

Christine Elms, Sewell, Teacher
Representative

Rita Ferris, Stephens, Teacher Representative

John Firley, Montclair, Teacher
Representative

Ingrid Fleury, Daugherty, Teacher
Representative

Melina Garcia, Northlake, Teacher
Representative

Frank Garza, Steadham, Teacher
Representative

Jeffery Green, Handley, Teacher
Representative

Penny Greeno, Brandenburg, Teacher
Representative

Noel Greenwood, Jackson, Non-Teaching
Representative

Ron Griffen, GISD, Administrative
Representative

Rachel Grogan, Herfurth, Teacher
Representative

Ashley Hager, Abbett, Teacher Representative

Donna Harbor, Dorsey, Teacher
Representative

Adrienne Henderson, Sellers, Teacher
Representative

Ronda Henry, Roach, Teacher Representative

Ximena Hobbs, Ethridge, Teacher
Representative

Kegan Johnson, Jackson, Teacher
Representative

Jennifer Jones, Lyles, Teacher Representative

Dr. Kemp-Graham, Community
Representative

Michelle King, Heather Glen, Teacher
Representative

Patrece King, SHS, Teacher Representative

Carra King, GISD, Administrative
Representative

Melanie Kircus, Parent Representative

Greg Kircus, Parent Representative

Hayley Knox, Lister, Teacher Representative

Lauren Linge, Shorehaven, Teacher
Representative

Rachel Littrell, Kimberlin, Teacher
Representative

Kindralyn Lott, Parent Representative

David Martinez, Beaver, Teacher
Representative

Chelsea McClatchey, GISD, Paraprofessional
Representative

Michelle McCray, Carver, Teacher
Representative

Kathy McCreary, Park Crest, Teacher
Representative

Tammy McDonald, Luna, Teacher
Representative

Ana Mewa, Bussey, Teacher Representative

Mida Milligan, GISD, Administrative
Representative

Kiara Morgan, O'Banion, Teacher
Representative

Jeff Munoz, Bullock, Teacher Representative

Jennifer Nelson, Shugart, Teacher
Representative

Marci O'Connor, Rowlett, Teacher
Representative

Esther O'Grady, Williams, Non-Teaching
Representative

Javier Pena, Garland AEC, Teacher
Representative

Kathy Perez, Business Representative

Kathrine Piland, Weaver, Teacher
Representative

Amelia Pinckley, Centerville, Teacher
Representative

Brittany Powell, Coyle, Teacher
Representative

Mark Prine, PAC, Non-Teaching
Representative

Robert Quach, NGHS, Non-Teaching
Representative

Servando Quintanilla, Williams, Teacher
Representative

Irene Quiros, Bradfield, Teacher
Representative

Miriam Rangel, Spring Creek, Teacher
Representative

Blanche Richardson, Bullock, Non-Teaching
Representative

Virginia Rodriguez, Sewell, Non-Teaching
Representative

Michael Ross, NFHS, Teacher Representative

Irene Ruiz, Paraprofessional Representative

Teri Sanchez, Webb, Teacher Representative

Kim Schnitker, Pearson, Teacher
Representative

Lori Shugart, Davis, Teacher Representative

Nelly Steer, Golden Meadows, Teacher
Representative

La'Tasha Stinnette, Watson, Teacher
Representative

Madison Stripling, Schrade, Teacher
Representative

Carissa Swing-Thomas, Couch, Teacher
Representative

Charles Thomas, Hickman, Teacher
Representative

Allison Thompson, Houston, Teacher
Representative

Michael Toohey, RHS, Teacher Representative

Adriana Torres, GHS, Teacher Representative

Jennifer Truax, Business Representative

Sharon Turnley, Golden Meadows, Non-
Teaching Representative

Jonelle Viernes, Sellers, Non-Teaching
Representative

Larry Walker, Community Representative

Joseph Walker, GHS, Non-Teaching
Representative

Ashley Wills, SGHS, Teacher Representative

Heather Wilson, Southgate, Teacher
Representative

Kristin Wolfkill, GISD, Administrative
Representative

Bonita Woods, Austin, Teacher
Representative

Bari Woolley, Community Representative

I. Introduction

The 84th Texas Legislature passed House Bill 1842 in 2015, providing public school districts the opportunity to become Districts of Innovation, giving public schools some of the flexibility that charter and open enrollment schools in the state currently have. To qualify, an eligible school district must adopt a five-year innovation plan according to the Texas Education Code.

Why would Garland ISD want to become a District of Innovation? The goal is to gain greater local control in decision-making to benefit our students and staff, to have increased autonomy from state mandates that govern educational programming, and to be empowered to innovate. Innovation does not necessarily mean ambitious new initiatives beyond the school district's current strategic plan. Instead, this plan allows Garland ISD the privilege and the flexibility to exercise more creative local control over existing quality programs without some of the statutory constraints in place now. Districts are not exempt from statutes that address curriculum, assessment and graduation requirements nor are they exempt from academic and financial accountability.

This plan is specific to the exemptions as outlined. The district will follow the Texas Education Code in all other areas. If at some point it is decided that changes or additional exemptions should be considered, as per the Districts of Innovation process, the district will reconvene the District Education Improvement Council to explore the request.

II. Innovation Plan Timeline

Step	Date Completed
Board resolution	Dec. 13, 2016: <u>Resolution</u> adopted by GISD School Board; available online
Public Hearing	Jan. 10, 2017: <u>Public hearing</u> held by GISD School Board
District advisory committee	Jan. 10, 2017: District Education Improvement Council (DEIC) designated as committee to create the District of Innovation plan
Committee creates plan	Jan. 25, 2017: meeting to begin work on the plan Feb. 8, 2017: meeting to continue work on the plan March 1, 2017: meeting
Plan posted online for 30 days	March 6-April 5, 2017

Commissioner notified	March 7, 2017
Public Meeting	April 5, 2017: Public meeting and unanimous vote to approve
Board vote	April 11, 2017: Unanimous vote to approve

III. Term of Plan

As outlined by the Texas Education Agency, the term of the Innovation Plan is five years. The plan will commence with the adoption at the April 11, 2017, Board of Trustees Regular meeting and conclude April 11, 2022, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The District Educational Improvement Committee (DEIC), in conjunction with district leadership, will monitor the effectiveness of the plan and recommend to the Board any suggested modifications, as needed.

IV. A Comprehensive Educational Program

Exceptional education has long been the focus of Garland ISD—an experience that provides rigorous instruction, technological innovation, college and career preparation, and meaningful relationships between schools, families and the community. The Plan’s comprehensive educational program is guided by and aligned with the Board’s Vision, District Mission, Shared Beliefs, and Strategic Plan for the District.

A. Vision Statement

Reaching the future by driving excellence, one student at a time.

B. Mission Statement

The Garland Independent School District exists as a **DIVERSE COMMUNITY** with a **SHARED VISION** that serves to provide an **EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION** to ALL of its students.

C. Shared Beliefs

We believe that ...

- a. quality education promotes collaboration, adaptability, goal setting, critical thinking, and innovation;
- b. successful learners need the support of not only parents, but the entire community;
- c. all students deserve equal access to quality educational resources;
- d. our students will excel through real-world, hands-on investigations helping to define individual pathways in life;
- e. as a community we will provide a safe and balanced learning environment for each child socially, mentally, physically, and academically;
- f. the needs of all students will drive every district decision because all children can excel in their learning;
- g. fostering a foundational approach builds learning skills to help students thrive in

- a global economy;
- h. uniqueness of all stakeholders' cultures, beliefs, and abilities is recognized, championed and celebrated by our district; and
- i. building and maintaining collaborative relationships is the cornerstone of our tradition-rich district.

D. Strategic Plan Goals

1. **Learning Environment:** We will provide a secure learning environment that allows active student participation and opportunities to collaborate through relevant content and instruction;
2. **Digital Tools:** We will develop processes and applications to achieve the equitable distribution of digital resources, along with adequate training and support for implementation;
3. **Learning Standards:** We will develop an aligned, standards-based system which will be delivered consistently where each child will receive the basic foundations in addition to challenging and relevant learning;
4. **Assessment:** We will develop a consistent, yet flexible, system of assessing students' progress with appropriate feedback and ensure this system is clearly communicated to students, staff, parents, and the community;
5. **Learning Organization:** We will promote and support innovative and exemplary curriculum, professional development, and instructional practices in order to continuously enhance teaching and extend learning;
6. **Accountability:** We will monitor and maintain key performance indicators to assess progress toward goals; and
7. **Partnerships:** We will create a variety of partnerships, including families, colleges, businesses, and community organizations, that establish avenues to vault student success.

V. GISD Ready Outcomes

The GISD Ready initiative transforms teaching and learning to ensure we meet the needs of 21st Century learners and that graduates are prepared for success in a globally competitive workforce. The 21st Century learner is a critical thinker with technology and literacy skills who communicates, collaborates, adapts and perseveres. In order to realize the vision of success outlined in the district Strategic Plan, the following profiles illustrate the necessary traits, characteristics and skills for each group:

- The learner
- The teacher
- The leader

GISD READY LEARNER OUTCOMES



CRITICAL THINKING

Analyze, evaluate, synthesize information and arguments, interpret information, and draw conclusions.



COMMUNICATION

Interact, collaborate and publish with peers, experts and others to produce original work and solve real world problems.



ADAPTABILITY

Construct, investigate and embrace new ideas.



TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

Utilize technology to assess, interpret and understand complex information.



PERSEVERANCE

Show resilience in maintaining and meeting established goals.



LITERACY SKILLS

Use language to stimulate the imagination, enhance thinking, to communicate, and to construct meaning.



COLLABORATION

Interact productively in personal, work and community contexts.

GISD READY TEACHER OUTCOMES



COMMUNICATOR

Communicates clear, relevant class expectations, procedures and timely information regarding student growth.



INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNER

Engages students in relevant, meaningful and rigorous learning experiences that include their interests, abilities, aptitudes and goals.



OPTIMIZER

Leads and supports students' use of digital learning assets and ethics to research, create and disseminate learning beyond the classroom walls.



COLLABORATOR

Establishes and maintains effective relationships with and between colleagues and students for the purpose of co-construction of products and sharing of ideas.



LEARNER

Goes beyond the district requirements for professional learning, exhibiting an inherent desire to be a life-long learner.



RELATER

Builds relationships with students to ensure a safe, supportive learning environment.



CULTURE DEVELOPER

Creates an environment where students actively participate and are free to take risks in learning. Cultivates and celebrates a strong awareness of and a sensitivity to cultural differences.

GISD READY LEADER OUTCOMES



VISIONARY

Establishes a collective vision that garners support and commitment from all stakeholders.



CULTURE DEVELOPER

Creates and enhances a collaborative environment conducive to teaching and learning.



CAPACITY BUILDER

Assesses the organization's abilities and plans activities aimed at increasing personnel potential.



INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER

Assesses current instructional needs and provides professional development to support academic achievement.



STUDENT ADVOCATE

Uses district and community resources to ensure student, social, emotional and academic needs are met.



COMMUNICATOR

Communicates specific, timely feedback to all stakeholders through a variety of media.



COMMUNITY LIAISON

Engages stakeholders in the decision-making process of the campus and actively participates in school/community events.

In order to realize the full potential of our GISD Ready Outcomes, the Board's Vision, the District Mission, and the Strategic Plan Goals, alignment of local practices and operations require flexibility in local control.

VI. Innovations

Certain requirements of the Texas Education Code inhibit the District's ability to fully meet our local needs. Therefore, GISD seeks exemption from the following permissible provisions of the Texas Education Code (TEC) as allowed in the statute:

- o Instructional Calendar/School Start Date
- o Minimum Minutes of Instruction/Length of School Day
- o Teacher Certification
- o Teacher Appraisal System
- o Campus Behavior Coordinator Provisions

School Start Date (TEC §25.0811) (EB LEGAL)

Current Statute:

The Texas Education Code states a school district may not begin student instruction before the fourth Monday of August. For many years this was the rule; however, districts had the option of applying for a waiver to begin earlier, even as early as the second Monday in August. The start-date waiver was eventually removed when the legislature determined school districts should begin the first semester no earlier than the fourth Monday of August, with no exceptions. The current process allows no flexibility in the design and balancing of instructional semesters to meet the needs of students or the wishes of the local Board of Trustees, who represent community interests.

Proposed Local Innovation/Flexibility:

Garland ISD will determine the local starting date of the first semester in its annual calendar creation process. The annual calendar will be submitted to the Board of Trustees – in accordance with district policy, procedure and practice.

Instructional Minutes and School Day Length (TEC §25.081) (TEC §25.082) (EB and EC LEGAL)

Current Statute:

These Texas Education Codes define the length of the instructional day as “420 minutes of instruction” or “seven hours each day including intermissions and recesses.” The intent of this code is to standardize across all districts the amount of time students are in classrooms. The code also allows school districts and charter schools to add minutes as necessary to compensate for minutes of instruction lost due to school closures for weather or other unanticipated events that could result in school closings. Garland ISD will meet the required 75,600 minutes; however, the district wants the flexibility to have early release days as needed without having to apply for a waiver. The district will support teachers and staff who participate in professional learning communities, perfecting their craft, deepening their content knowledge and analyzing student data.

Proposed Local Innovation/Flexibility:

Garland ISD will maintain the total of 75,600 minutes of instruction per year but seeks an exemption from these statutes as necessary to reach the 75,600-minute goal in a manner that

meets local needs, without being confined to either 420 minutes or seven hours of instruction every day. This exemption allows the district to alter the length of a school day or a school year, which would include additional professional development, collaboration opportunities for educators, and structured breaks throughout the year for students, providing for social and emotional benefits.

Teacher Certification (TEC §21.003) (TEC §21.0031) (TEC §21.051) (TEC §21.053) (DBA and DK LEGAL)

Current Statute:

In the event a district cannot locate a certified teacher for a position or a teacher is teaching a subject outside of their certification, the district must submit a request to the Texas Education Agency. TEA then approves or denies this request.

Proposed Local Innovation/Flexibility:

With a new Career and Technical Center and innovative courses, local decisions about teacher certification would provide a better opportunity to offer innovation in course selections for CTE courses, high-demand and dual credit courses. By obtaining exemption from existing teacher certification requirements, the district will have the flexibility to hire community college instructors, university professors, industry experts with a minimum three years of experience or internal applicants seeking assignments outside of their traditional certification area. This will enrich applicant pools in specific content areas and afford more students the opportunity to take courses that align with their career paths. Parents will continue to be notified in writing whenever a teacher does not have required certification.

Teacher and Administrator Appraisals (TEC §21.352) (TEC §21.3541) (DNA LEGAL)

Current Statute:

New state-wide teacher appraisal systems, the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS) and the Texas Principal Evaluation and Support System (T-PESS), are being introduced for the first time since 1997. While these systems are designed to meet the needs of the entire state, these systems also require state standardized test scores be used as the primary evaluation measure for both teachers and administrators. This will prove challenging and possibly inequitable when determining what measure will be used for teachers who do not teach core content, state-tested subjects.

Proposed Local Innovation/Flexibility:

The district has invested time and training into using the new state appraisal system. We propose that we continue to utilize T-TESS and T-PESS, without the value-added measure, as it is currently being used. This change would improve equity and team building, in addition to teacher retention.

Campus Behavior Coordinator Provisions (TEC §37.0012) (FO LEGAL)

Current Statute:

Senate Bill 107 requires the designation of a campus behavior coordinator on each campus. This designee is responsible for maintaining student discipline and the implementation of Chapter 37, Subchapter A.

Proposed Local Innovation/Flexibility:

Our approach to discipline is more collaborative, with multiple administrators providing emotional and social support to students. Exemption from this requirement increases the opportunity for campus collaboration in regards to student discipline, as outlined in the GISD Student Code of Conduct and campus discipline plans.

Adoption of Plan

Garland ISD has met all of the process requirements outlined by the TEA and the Commissioner of Education to receive the designation as a District of Innovation. The local Innovation Plan was developed and approved by the Committee.

In addition, a public hearing was conducted on April 5, 2017.

The plan was then posted on the District's website for the required 30 days followed by approval by the Board of Trustees, commencing on March 6, 2017 and concluding on April 5, 2017.

Approved by the Committee on the 5th day of April, 2017. Approved by the Garland ISD Board of Trustees on the 11th day of April, 2017.

GARLAND ISD INNOVATION PLAN AMENDMENT TO CURRENT LOCAL INNOVATION PLAN

AREA OF INNOVATION

With regards to each area of innovation, the District declares exemption from the listed statutory provision, as well as any implementing rules or regulations promulgated pursuant to those statutory provisions by any state agency or entity, including but not limited to the Commissioner of Education, Texas Education Agency, State Board for Educator Certification, and State Board of Education.

1. **Preclusion from providing alternative Uniform Group Coverage Program once the program of coverages under Chapter 1579, Insurance Code is implemented.**

Exemption from: §22.004(i)

Related Board Policies: GISD CRD (LEGAL) and CRD (LOCAL)

Manner in which statute inhibits the goals of the plan

TEC §22.004(i) states that a school district may not make group health coverage available to its employees pursuant to TEC §22.004(b) after the date a District implements the program of coverages provided under Chapter 1579 of the Texas Insurance Code. The current process allows no flexibility in the design of group health insurance benefits to fit the needs of all El Paso ISD employees. This provision also prohibits the District from procuring group health insurance benefits that may provide better coverages for its employees and at a lower cost. This provision is in direct contradiction to the wishes of the local Board of Trustees who represent community interests in this matter.

On February 25, 2020 the Board of Trustees adopted findings declaring that Texas Education Code 22.004 is not in any of the prohibited exemptions that can be included in a District's local innovation plan pursuant to Texas Education Code 12.A004 and the list of the Commissioner's prohibited exemptions in Texas Administrative Code Title 19, Chapter 102, subchapter JJ, Section 102.1309

Innovation Strategies

- a. Increased local control of the group health benefits to allow the District to be responsive to employee and community needs.